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CBC Newsletter

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For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

Volume 61 February 2015 Number 1

Think Spring!
Clemson, SC to Host May Meeting

Jeff Click

The 2015 CBC Spring Meeting will be held in Clemson, on the shore of Lake Hartwell in beautiful northwestern South Carolina. Upstate South Carolina boasts a great variety of habitats, including large lakes, agricultural fields, foothills, and even mountains, and offers some of the best spring migration birding that can be found anywhere in the Carolinas. The meeting will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 1st and 2nd.

We will bird at such well-known birding hot-spots as Lake Conestee Nature Park and the Townville area, but will also introduce birders to hidden gems known by the local birding community such as the Eastatoe Valley, the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Bad Creek, the Nine Times Preserve, and the South Carolina Botanical Garden. All of these locations regularly produce exciting finds during migration, but remain largely unknown to birders outside the region. We'll also offer trips that include boat tours of stunning Lake Jocassee.

Home base for the weekend will be the Courtyard Clemson, a new hotel with plenty of amenities to keep us comfortable between outings including a lobby Starbucks, bistro, and bar. The hotel is close to some of our birding destinations and to many dining options. The CBC rate for a double or a king is $99 per night. To book with the CBC block, call the hotel at 864-654-8833 and be sure to mention the Carolina Bird Club. In case you prefer to register online, a link will be posted on the CBC website.

Presentations on Friday and Saturday evenings will be held at the auditorium in Clemson University's Madren Center. On Friday night, we will be fortunate enough to have a speaker from the Nature Conservancy in South Carolina to present details on the Rocky Point Plantation that the CBC is helping to preserve. We will hear about The Nature Conservancy's Winyah Area initiative and how the Rocky Point property fits into that, as well as their efforts along the SC coast as a whole. Our speaker on Saturday evening will be J. Drew Lanham, professor of wildlife ecology in the School of Agricultural, Forest and Environmental Sciences. Dr. Lanham, a gifted and inspiring speaker, will give a presentation titled *Evolution of the Birder Conservationist – How to Make Each Bird Count.*

Flock to the SC Upstate this spring and rack up the migrant numbers while enjoying some beautiful scenery and great company!

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Letter from the President

Katherine Higgins

The New Year is here and it is time for some reflection. I've been president of the CBC since May of 2013 and there are only a few months left in my term in office. Here's a brief review of what the CBC Executive Committee (EC) has accomplished these past 18 months on your behalf.

In August of 2013 we all met in Charlotte for the annual planning meeting. We began the process of doing a Strategic Analysis and Plan, thanks to the initiative and leadership of Karyl Gabriel who had been through this process during her professional career. We took time at the next three meetings to go through the process of assessing where the CBC was, where we wanted the club to be, and how we planned to move the CBC in the direction that we thought would satisfy both the mission of the CBC and the needs and desires of the membership. You can find the detailed results of our working sessions at:
http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/planning.pdf

To begin, we all agreed that the CBC mission statement was still valid. We assessed the current CBC programs in relationship to that mission statement and found that the CBC activities were on target for the most part. We wanted to do more in the areas of conservation and education. With these goals in mind, the EC undertook several important initiatives. We supported the efforts of our Young Birders Club by allocating start-up funding and by incorporating their organization under our CBC non-profit umbrella. To add to the CBC education efforts, we have added a Novice Birders field trip to each of our meetings. These field trips fill up fast, and the attendees have learned a lot and had fun.

The EC looked for a conservation land purchase to fulfill the wishes of a bequest made to the CBC via an estate many, many years ago. The grantor made allowance for the CBC to use the proceeds from their bequest for club operational expenses, but specified in their bequest that the money could be used to purchase conservation land that serves as good bird habitat. With the help of the Nature Conservancy in South Carolina, we identified such a tract of land, and the CBC is making a significant grant toward the purchase of that tract. See Jeff Click's article on page nine for more details.

These are just a couple of significant accomplishments of the CBC this past year. Now I would like to talk to you about volunteering to help with the programs of the CBC. I volunteered to serve on the EC several years ago and then to be President in 2013. It was pretty scary, but I felt like I should give back to the club. The CBC has enabled me to have many wonderful experiences with birds and birders in North and South Carolina for over 20 years. Being President has been a wonderful experience. I have had the honor to work with an outstanding Executive Committee and with the other volunteers who produce the Newsletter (Steve Shultz) and the Chat (Don Seriff and Josh Southern) regularly and professionally. Chris Hill and Taylor Piefhoff are doing great things with their respective Bird Records Committees. Carol Bowman has been a great Headquarters Secretary with a fantastic attitude and efficient and accurate work. Kent Fiala, our web-master, gets things put on the web faster than we can think of new things to put out there. And of course I always give credit and thanks for those who volunteer to lead the field trips at meetings and the bonus field trips throughout the year.

I would like to encourage each of you to think about how you might serve the CBC. What skills can you bring to the effort of keeping our club vibrant and responsive to the needs of our members and to the needs of our birds? If you would like to serve, please email Ron Clark, the Nominating Committee Chair, with your thoughts. Ron's email is:
waxwing@bellsouth.net.

Thanks for your support and hope to see you all in Nags Head in 2015.

Birding Iceland in Winter

Steve Shultz

So you are on your way to Iceland during the winter months. Your Icelandair flight is crossing over the southern tip of Greenland on its way to Keflavik where you will pick up a rental car and make the short drive to Reykjavik. Plenty of friends asked you why you would be winging toward the planet's most northern capital during the colder months (which more or less consist of October through April). You may have mentioned that you scored a great Groupon, that the package rates on Icelandair's website were too good to pass up, that you wanted a shot at seeing the Northern Lights, or maybe you just wanted to have a meet and greet with the elves rumored to live in the vast lava fields that stretch from horizon to horizon. Whatever your reason, you wonder, as birders often do, what sort of birding might be had and what you can expect.

As the closest European country by air from much of the United States, Iceland has become a popular destination for short jaunts, long weekends, longer trips, and stopovers to other locations farther east. Visitors in winter months are often hoping to spot the ghostly aurora or to partake of Reykjavik's famously raucous nightlife and bar scene. In either case, since these activities take place after dark, what is a birder/tourist to do during the day? Well bird, of course! And while winter in Iceland may seem to be a contraindication to a good day of birding, there are a number of opportunities for seeing waterfowl, gulls, and the hardy passerines that pass the long, dark winter on the island (which, interestingly, is the Icelandic word for Iceland, written as "Island".)

Iceland, even during the relatively warm summer months, hosts few land birds when compared to most other countries, and visitors may be surprised at the lack of avifauna. During the winter months only the hardiest birds remain in country, and while few in number of species, birders enjoy the chance to see Common Redpoll, Snow Bunting, [Rock] Ptarmigan, and European species such as Redwing and Blackbird. Snow Buntings rove near and far in small flocks, even appearing in the Reykjavik suburbs. Common Redpolls may be found in the low birch trees lining waterways, their red caps adding a dash of color to the white landscape. Ptarmigan may be common one year and scarce the next, but are always a possibility in areas with proper habitat.

One of the reasons that Iceland lacks many land birds is due to a scarcity of trees. Prior to human habitation, Iceland's landscape included forests stretching to the edge of the horizon. After centuries of use as firewood, building material for ships and structures, and clearing for farming, the trees are gone. Thin volcanic soil results in very slow re-growth, so much of the island remains barren of trees, and will for some time. The joke in Iceland is that if you find yourself lost in the forest, simply stand up.

One area where trees, and accompanying birds, can be found is in the metropolitan Reykjavik area. From public gardens to residential side streets, trees and ornamental plantings attract species like [Winter] Wren, Redwing, and Blackbird. Note that the Wren represents an endemic subspecies *islandicus*. Blackbirds, which are actually a type of thrush, were formerly rare, but have begun to overwinter in the Reykjavik area with some regularity. Most of the land birds in Iceland fall under the category "little dickie birds", but there are some larger and/or more aerial species. Northern Ravens occur in most habitats, though in fairly small numbers and often as individual birds. Gyrfalcons drift toward coastal locations in the winter and can sometimes be seen barreling across harbors hunting their next meal. Also keep an eye out for the Icelandic subspecies of Merlin. The Reykjavik Botanical Garden (no fee) is a great place to seek out passerines, and the ponds (when not frozen) often harbor waterfowl. The gardens are in the Laugardalur area just east of downtown and easily accessible via city bus or private car.

But landbirding is really just a sideshow to the main event, for birders visiting Iceland in the winter look forward to the opportunity of seeing numbers of waterfowl, water birds, and gulls. Whooper Swan, Greylag Goose, Common Eider, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Tufted Duck, [Eurasian] Teal, Eurasian Wigeon and other waterfowl can be found wintering on the south and west coasts, with productive areas either in Reykjavik or within an

Iceland

easy drive. In the center of town the Tjornin, or simply "the pond", provides an easy way to see many of the species of wintering swans, ducks, and geese. Since at least a portion of the Tjornin remains ice-free through the winter, birds are often concentrated in a small area near City Hall and easy to observe. On a recent visit I enjoyed more than fifty Whooper Swans on less than an acre of open water. Come spring most birds depart for breeding areas, but usually a few Tufted Ducks, Mallards, and Greylag Geese remain. Between the Tjornin and the city airport, located just a short distance to the south, a marshy area crisscrossed with walking paths provides more opportunities to enjoy waterfowl. Look for Common Shelduck here. This bird recently began breeding in Iceland and some remain through the winter.

Harbors provide some of the best birding during the winter. All of the harbors on the southwest coast remain ice free, and most offer easy access via breakwaters and docks. Unlike many commercial areas in the United States, access to the wharves is usually unrestricted, and birders can obtain great views of sea ducks including Common Eider, Long-tailed, and Harlequin Duck simply by parking the car and walking out along the dock. Great Cormorant and European Shag can be found along most of the coast, and gulls of various types frequent the protected waters. While most alcids winter farther south, Black Guillemot can be found in small numbers.

Reykjavik's main commercial harbor is a great place to look for coastal birds. By parking near the Harpa concert venue or near the fishing boat docks on the basin's far side, one can walk along the breakwaters and docks, scanning the waters below for cormorants, sea ducks, gulls, and the occasional guillemot. Outside of the capital, most towns feature a harbor that can be similarly birded. Gulls seem to love harbors, and Black-headed, Common [Mew], [European] Herring, Iceland, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls may be found in varying numbers. Lesser Black-backed Gulls, which are abundant in the summer months, mainly move south of the island for the winter, but are replaced by Iceland Gulls, which are rather scarce in the summer, breeding mainly in Greenland.

Just west of the downtown area, the Seltjarnarnes Peninsula offers easy access to rocky headlands, broad expanses of open water, and several small ponds that, unless they have frozen over, usually house birds including Whooper Swan, Greylag Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, and [Common] Teal. Snow Buntings often forage in the windswept flats near the ponds. A shoreline park running the length of the peninsula on both shores provides easy access to the numerous black sand beaches and rocky points. Check the rocks and beaches carefully for shorebirds including Eurasian Oystercatcher, Purple Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, and Common Redshank. Just offshore from the beach, scan the waters for diving ducks and loons.

Visitors to Reykjavik often make a day trip to a trio of attractions inland from the coast that are collectively known as the Golden Circle. The Gullfoss waterfall, small geyser basin at Geysir, and national park at Pingvellir provide plenty of non-bird eye candy and can be productive for the limited number of land birds wintering on the island. Ptarmigan and Redpoll may be found at Pingvellir along with cruising Ravens, flocks of bounding Snow Buntings, and occasional Redwing. Check the waters of the river and Pingvallavatn Lake for ducks, with the resident Mallards and Tufted Duck being the most likely suspects.

Iceland is somewhat famous to European birders as being the only place in Europe where Barrow's Goldeneye nests. Many of the birds remain throughout the winter, congregating at favored sites. One of these is conveniently located on the way back to Reykjavik from the Golden Circle where Highway 36 runs along the Sog River downstream from Pingvallavatn, the large natural lake partially protected by Pingvellir National Park. Look below the dams that dot the river, the goldeneye tend to hang out in the tailraces.

A short distance west of Reykjavik lies the lava-bound Reykjanes Peninsula. Often the first glimpse of Iceland for international visitors arriving at Keflavik's expansive airport, the moon-like landscape may at first seem devoid of birds. And while landbirding may be slow, the rocky coast harbors numbers of wa-

(Continued on page 5)

Iceland

(Continued from page 4)

terfowl, loons, shorebirds and gulls. Traveling toward Keflavik from Reykjavik, one cannot miss the massive Rio Tinto Alcan Iceland aluminum smelter extending alongside the highway for hundreds of meters. While it may seem strange to see an aluminum smelter in a country with no aluminum ore, recall that Iceland possess an abundance of the other major input into the metal's production, electricity. Unwrought aluminum represents Iceland's second most important material export after fish.

But we digress. The aluminum smelter's relevancy to birding is that it is situated on a small inlet where gulls, ducks, and shorebirds may be observed. By pulling off the highway onto the road shoulder, or on the shoulder of the plant's entrance road, birders can scan the rocky pools for birds and usually obtain excellent views, for the light is good here most of the day.

Continuing along the coast, the next location of interest to birders is a small lake and patch of nearby woodlands. As the only significant copse of trees for miles, this park-like area warrants a visit. Any of the tree-loving species wintering in Iceland may be present, and unless frozen, the small lake may hold waterfowl. The lake and woods are publically accessible via a well maintained road leading from Route 43 approximately 1 mile south of the intersection of 43 and 41. Route 43 is the road leading to the Blue Lagoon, one of Iceland's most famous tourist attractions.
Back along the immediate coast, birders may wish to detour into the town of Keflavik for a bite to eat and to scan the commercial and recreational harbors for birds. Expected species are the same as listed previously for Reykjavik harbor, with a better chance at Black Guillemot. At the recreational harbor in Keflavik note the whimsical dwelling built into the lava cliffs with the oversized door and windows. This is the home of a storybook giantess, and a peek through the windows reveals giant-sized furniture (but sadly no real giant or giantess.)

Continuing to follow Route 41 west from Keflavik, the next "hotspot", the village of Gardur, may be the best on the peninsula. Here the land hooks to a point extending well into the Atlantic where seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and gulls may be found in good numbers. By driving through the town of small, well-kept homes, one arrives at a park that includes two historic lighthouses and walkways along the shore. Signage describes the birds that may be found in the area, and birders might even pick up a few words of Icelandic (but don't worry, the signs are captioned in English as well.) Gardur is well-known in Iceland as an excellent birding location, in part due to its location where it represents the first land that many migrants spot when arriving in spring, and due to the climate, which is just a bit warmer than inland areas, and thus somewhat attractive to lingering fall migrants. The broad flats extending to the east and west of the point provide excellent foraging habitat for birds of the intertidal zone, although at low tide the birds may be rather distant. A concrete causeway leading out to one of the lighthouses allows birders to get closer to the action, and the lighthouse itself provides a wind and rain/snow break in case of inclement weather.

The lonely road leading from Gardur south to the hamlet of Hafnir passes several ponds, lagoons, and bays that may hold birds. Note the boardwalk and viewing gazebo at the large pond on the east side of the road leading into the village of Sandgeroi.
The hamlet of Hafnir offers another opportunity to view sea ducks in the town harbor, and this area is well known as a favored haunt of Harlequin Ducks in winter. The broad, shallow bay just outside of town may be birded from alongside the road, and may support decent numbers of waterfowl.

The south coast of the Reykjanes Peninsula offers somewhat fewer birding opportunities during the winter months since most of the shoreline consists of towering cliffs. While liberally populated with seabird colonies in the warmer months, during winter you will likely only find beautiful scenery.

Birders may wish to take a non-birding break at this point and visit what may be Iceland's most famous tourist attraction, the Blue Lagoon. In 1976 a pool of milky blue, mineral rich water formed as a result of

(Continued on page 8)

Birder's Book Review

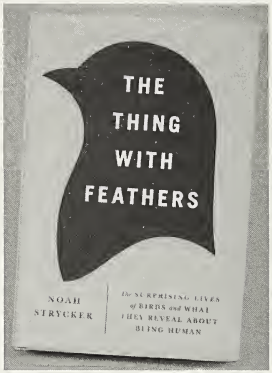
Paul Serridge

The Thing With Feathers
Noah Strycker
ISBN 978-1594486357, 304 pages, hardcover
2014, Riverhead, $27.95

This book was recommended to me by my birding friend Steve Thomas from Aynor, SC. It is subtitled *The Surprising Lives of Birds and What They Reveal About Being Human.* That seemed quite a challenge, but taking Steve's word that I would enjoy the book, I borrowed it from the library started to read.

I was immediately hooked by the introduction in which the author starts by inviting us to "imagine what might happen if birds studied us". Along with many birders, I have often thought that I was not sure who was watching whom. I think birds with a good ear would identify me as a vagrant or introduced species based on voice. My British accent would immediately tell the inquisitive Golden-crowned Kinglet that gave me a close inspection yesterday that I am not native to South Carolina, or to any neighboring state. But as Strycker suggests, in order to tie down the ID the birds would have to study my behavior and habits. What would they make of that if they had only a bird's frame of reference? And yet we usually interpret bird behavior solely from a human perspective. In this book Strycker attempts to look at birds from their point of view, rather than from ours. And in doing so he discusses lots of related ideas involving art and science.

Strycker is an associate editor for the ABA *Birding* magazine, a busy bird guide, and an experienced researcher. He describes himself as a "full time bird nerd". However, as this book demonstrates, he must have time for a lot of other activities and has wide interests in many different fields. Even his academic background is interesting, having graduated Magna Cum Laude from Oregon State University with a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife with a minor in Fine Arts. Now there's an interesting combination! He is an experienced runner (four marathons), and was the #1 singles tennis player at OSU for four years. This is his second book… and he is only 26! I found myself asking how on earth he has time to bird, let alone do it "full time".



Back to the book. In a series of well-written and well-researched essays, each dealing with different behaviors of specific bird species, Strycker made me think about a lot of things, both ornithological and philosophical. The first two essays (one about Starlings, the other about homing pigeons) particularly appealed to me as they reminded me of growing up in the industrial midlands of England. Many of our neighbors kept pigeons and knew a lot about their birds. And, of course, the Starling (I never heard the bird described as a European Starling until I arrived in the USA) was very common and was accepted rather than being despised, as is too often the case here. In the chapter "Spontaneous Order", Strycker discusses the way Starlings manage to wheel and turn in huge flocks without bumping into each other. He also, like me, rather likes Starlings.

Other subjects of his essays include vultures and their sense of smell, movements of Snowy Owls, aggressive behavior of hummingbirds, penguins and what makes them nervous, dancing parrots and music, the pecking order of domestic chickens, the food hoarding behavior of Clark's Nutcrackers, birds' self-awareness (why do they attack their image seen in a mirror but ignore it when seen in a puddle?), the bowerbird and art appreciation, Fairy-wrens that live cooperatively and help raise the young of other individuals, and finally the monogamous behavior of Wandering Albatrosses and the very promiscuous behavior of Saltmarsh Sparrows (the latter with a reference to studies conducted by a team that included Chris Hill, current chair of the SC Bird Records Committee.)

This book is the very best collection of essays about birds I have ever read. At times Strycker seems to go out on a limb comparing bird behavior with that of humans. But he always does so in a way that made

(Continued on page 8)

CBC Bonus Trip To Southeastern Arizona
April 17-26, 2015

Considered one of the top birding spots in the country, southeastern Arizona is on our schedule for April 17th-26th. We'll hit many of the hot spots from Tucson to Portal and south to the border, covering five famous canyons, plus desert terrain and the "sky islands". Seven or eight hummingbird species are likely. If you've never birded west of the Mississippi River, expect 70+ lifers. One person got 82 on the trip there two years ago.

We'll fly into Tucson on Thursday evening. On Friday we'll search for Burrowing Owls then head to Portal, a small town five miles from New Mexico. We'll spend two days birding the Chiricahua Mountains. This is a good area for Montezuma Quail and the only easily accessible spot in the country for Mexican Chickadee. One night will be spent owling with a local guide with Western Screech-Owl and Elf Owl likely and a good chance for Whiskered Screech-Owl. Other species include Elegant Trogan, Red-Faced, Olive, and Grace's Warblers, Painted Redstart, Curve-billed, Crissal and possible Bendire's Thrashers, Pygmy Nuthatch, Scaled and Gambel's Quail, Hepatic and Western Tanagers, and Blue-throated and Magnificent Hummingbirds.

Next we go to the Sierra Vista area, visiting Ramsey, Miller, Carr, and Ash Canyons. Targets include Greater Pewee, Plumbeous and Hutton's Vireos, Cordilleran and Buff-breasted Flycatchers, Mexican Spotted Owl and lots of hummingbirds, with White-Eared possible. San Pedro Riparian Area should produce many species such as Swainson's and Gray Hawks, Bullock's, Scott's and Hooded Orioles and possibly Green Kingfisher.

From Sierra Vista we visit the best spot in the country for Violet-crowned Hummingbird and stop by the famous Patagonia Rest Stop (possible Thick-billed Kingbirds and Bell's Vireo). Patagonia Lake State Park might produce Rufous-winged, Rufous-crowned and Black-throated Sparrows, Bronzed Cowbird and a chance for Black-capped Gnatcatcher.

Then we drive to Madera Canyon, considered possibly the best overall spot in the area. Our lodging has extensive feeders, and we'll walk the trails of desert and woods, looking for Mexican Jay, Bridled Titmouse, Phainopepla, and Zone-tailed Hawk. At night we'll look for Elf Owl and Mexican Whip-Poor-Will.

Back in Tucson, we'll bird the desert scrub of Agua Caliente Park for Lucy's Warbler, Gila Woodpecker, Vermillion Flycatcher and Harris' Hawk. Then we'll drive to the top of Mt. Lemmon, with many stops along the way as we move from desert to mixed conifer forest. This is a good area for Northern Pygmy-Owl, Yellow-eyed Junco, Grace's, Red-faced, Black-throated Gray, Virginia's and Olive Warblers, Steller's Jay and Pygmy Nuthatch. Our last day will include a visit to Sweetwater Wetlands, a reclaimed water treatment area. Here we should see Greater Roadrunner, Abert's Towhee, Cactus Wren, Gambel's Quail, Tropical and Cassin's Kingbirds, and Brown-crested Flycatcher.

Finally, we'll bird both units of the Saguaro National Park, looking for desert birds such as Lucy's Warbler, Gilded Flicker, Verdin, Say's Phoebe and Canyon Towhee. We'll stay in Tucson for flights out on Sunday.

Late April is a great time for birding Arizona. The temperature is still mild, there's very little rain, and the birds are plentiful. **The price for the trip is $1,460 for double occupancy and $1,900 for single.** This includes ten nights lodging, ground transportation, entry fees, owling, and guided birded each day. You pay airfare to Tucson, lunches, dinners and any personal spending. The trip is limited to 7 participants. A deposit of $400, due by Feb. 1st will hold your spot, with the balance due by Feb. 21st. Cancellations after March 1 allow for a refund only if someone is found to take your place.

The leader for the trip is Ron Clark. This will be his ninth time to the area, five of which were taking groups. If you have any questions, or want to reserve a spot, contact him at waxwing@bellsouth.net. You can also get a species list from the last trip and photos.

Iceland

(Continued from page 5)
operations at the nearby Svartsengi Geothermal Plant, and in 1981 people started bathing in the silica and sulphur rich waters. Not one to let a potential money-maker go to waste, the fine folks at the Blue Lagoon built a spa in 1992 and began charging admission. And the rates to bathe in mineral rich wastewater from a power plant are mighty steep my friend. Entrance to the hot 102 degree water runs a cool €33, but that bare-bones entry presumes you have your own towel, bathrobe, and other accoutrements. So, for a mere €58, visitors get to use a fresh bath towel, borrow a robe, get one beverage from the in-pool bar, and receive one lump of clay. Ok, the lump of clay is actually a "spa treatment mask" but it looks like a $7.50 lump of clay. So not only does one need to be convinced that going into an outdoor pool in 30 degree temperatures is a good idea, one also has to have €33 or more performing no better function. But you'll probably love it.

And speaking of the weather, isn't Iceland a particularly cold place to visit in the winter? Bathed in vestiges of the Gulf Stream, and surrounded by ocean water, Iceland's winter climate, at least along the commonly visited south and west coast, may surprise you. Temperatures often hover around 30 degrees Fahrenheit and while snowfall is common, roads are kept generally clear and accumulations don't often amount to more than a few inches. You'll likely find Minneapolis, Chicago, or Buffalo to be a more challenging winter destination than Reykjavik from a weather perspective. All rental cars will, in winter, come equipped with snow tires. Standard 2WD vehicles are sufficient for trips in the vicinity of Reykjavik, with 4WD available (at much higher tariffs) for the more cautious or those wishing to venture farther into the interior. As would be expected for a northern destination in winter, daylight takes a backseat to long hours of darkness, but trips in early or late winter provide about eight hours of daylight, decreasing to about five in mid-winter. Remember that due to the shallow angle of the sun as it approaches the horizon, effective daylight in Iceland extends for up to an hour before and after sunrise/sunset.

So as you wing your way toward Iceland, marveling at the Greenland ice cap or watching for ghostly aurora from your airplane window (choose a window seat on the port side), rest assured that between epic bouts of barhopping and elf greeting, Iceland will most likely provide you with some exciting winter birding as well.

Góða ferð!

Book Review

(Continued from page 6)
me think about both birds and people. After reading *The Thing with Feathers* it will be difficult for me to look at birds without wondering why they are doing what they are doing and what it means. Most of the time, we will never know. Suffice it to say that the term "bird brain" is now for me totally meaningless – at least as applied to birds!

Read this book – it's a little gem. But don't just take my word for it. Here is what Scott Weidensaul had to say: "Noah Strycker explores the increasing likelihood that birds enjoy a vastly richer intellectual, emotional, and even artistic life than we smug humans have ever suspected. Read this book, and you'll never look at the chickadee on your feeder the same way again."

Now I have to get my hands on Strycker's first book, *Among Penguins*, published in 2011.

The Newsletter and The Chat are online on the CBC website. The most recent editions of each are only accessible to CBC members. To access the "members only" content, you must first create a login and password. This can be done at http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/register.html.

Once you have your login and password established, you can login at https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/login.html.

Haymaker Fund to Protect South Carolina Habitat

Jeff Click

Over twenty years ago, Richard Haymaker made a very generous donation to the Carolina Bird Club in honor and memory of his mother, Emma V. Haymaker. The bequest specified that earnings from the invested principal could be used without restriction as needed by the Club, but that the principal could only be used for conservation of land for the protection of birds. For many years, the earnings were used to help offset miscellaneous costs for the Club. In 2014, the CBC Executive Committee decided to seek out potential partners in utilizing the principal, reaching out to The Nature Conservancy, in part due to their track record of pursuing and protecting some of the most ecologically significant at-risk tracts of land.

The Nature Conservancy in South Carolina submitted a proposal describing a selection of properties they hope to protect in the SC coastal plain as part of their Winyah Area conservation initiative. This project aims to protect a diverse slate of habitats throughout the area, including longleaf pine forest, maritime forest, wetlands, and Carolina bays. These varied lands provide important breeding, migration, and wintering grounds for numerous bird species. Many tracts of land in this corridor are under threat of development.

In August, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to award the Haymaker fund in its entirety, a sum of $68,000, to The Nature Conservancy to help towards protection of one of these properties. At the end of September, some members of the Executive Committee joined Nature Conservancy representatives to tour the tracts, after which we decided to devote our funds towards the purchase of the Rocky Point Plantation.

The Rocky Point Plantation is a beautiful 482-acre plot of land, including over a mile of frontage on the Black River. It includes oak hardwood forests, loblolly pine forest, and about 120 acres of bottomland forest along the river. The property historically served as a boat landing and public park for the local community, but in recent years has been owned by a timber management company and closed to public use. The Nature Conservancy will help the Winyah Rivers Foundation to acquire the land and develop a long-term management plan in collaboration with Georgetown County and the SC Department of Natural Resources. The property will then once again be managed as a public park and natural area.

We on the Executive Committee are proud to help with the completion of this worthy project and to fulfill the wishes of the donor. We hope that you also are proud of our collective involvement with this effort. At the Clemson meeting in May 2015, we will have a presentation from a representative of The Nature Conservancy detailing the Rocky Point Plantation and overall efforts in the state. After the purchase is finalized in the near future, we hope to offer field trips to the property you helped to protect!

The Carolina Bird Club warmly welcomes the following new members:

Lee Mulligan
Hendersonville, NC

Diane Lombardi
Asheville, NC

Jackie & Eric White
Leland, NC

Martha Eblen
Asheville, NC

Lynn Murray
Oriental, NC

Michael & Patrick Kerrigan
Mt. Pleasant, SC

Cathy Loughlin
Summerville, SC

Vern & Kristen Bothwell
Hillsborough, NC

Timothy & Katie Wood
Mount Pleasant, SC

Alyssa & John Langgood
Cary, NC

Russell & Stacy Oates
Burnsville, NC

Nancy Pinter
Raleigh, NC

Penny White & Barbara Norton
Asheville, NC

Bob Repoley & Laura Seelbach
Burnsville, NC

Karen Wiles
Hampstead, NC

Lucas Bobay
Holly Springs, NC

Laura Sebrell
Raleigh, NC

Mary Austin Smith
Wilmington, NC

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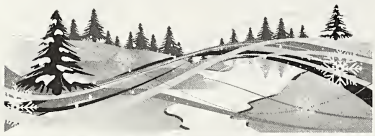

Upcoming CBC Meetings

Spring 2015 - Clemson, SC
Fall 2015 - Hickory, NC

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Wilmington, NC kathwrens@gmail.com

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Jeff Click, Easley, SC
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Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of December, February, April, June, August, and October.
Headquarters Secretary, Carol Bowman, Pinehurst, NC
hq@carolinabirdclub.org

CBC Website: www.carolinabirdclub.org

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